

Trinity Episcopal Parish House  
1009 Vermont Street, Lawrence  
Douglas County  
Kansas

HABS No. KANS-10

HABS  
KANS

23. LAWR

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PHOTOGRAPHS  
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Eastern Office, Division of Design and Construction  
120 South Third Street  
Philadelphia 6, Pennsylvania

## HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

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TRINITY EPISCOPAL PARISH HOUSE  
1009 Vermont Street  
Lawrence, Douglas County, Kansas

Present Owner: Trinity Episcopal Church, 1009 Vermont Street,  
Lawrence, Kansas

Present Occupant: Owner

Present Use: Parish house.

Brief Statement of Significance: This stone structure in the Gothic style is the earliest church building in Kansas (with the exception of the early Indian missions) and dates from Territorial times.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Original and subsequent owners: Trinity Episcopal Church
2. Date of erection: 1858 (Kansas State Historical Society, The Kansas Historical Quarterly, Summer 1957, Vol. XXIII, No. 2, Topeka, Kansas, p. 127)
3. Architect, builder, suppliers etc.:  
The church was built under the direction of the Reverend Charles Reynolds.
4. Original plans: None located.
5. Notes on alterations and additions:  
Dr. R. W. Oliver, who became rector in 1863, added a chancel in the east, a tower on the north, a vestibule at the northeast, a transept on the north and diamond paned windows. The tower dates from 1865. (Whittemore, Margaret, Historic Kansas: A Centenary Sketchbook, University of Kansas Press, Lawrence, 1954, p. 120)  
The plan for the additions was drawn by F. H. Oliver of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. (Wright, Jennie C., Early History of Trinity Episcopal Church, Lawrence, Kansas, 1927, p. 30) In May of 1867 the church was carpeted. (Ibid., p. 32) Between 1900 and 1910 a new roof was placed on the building and gas heating was installed. (The Kansas Churchman, February 1910, Vol. 36, No. 2, Topeka, Kansas, p. 13)

## 6. Important old views and references:

Illustration of Lawrence in 1859 showing the church (DeZurko, E. R., "Early Kansas Churches," Kansas State College Bulletin, Vol. XXXIII, No. 5, April 1, 1949, Topeka, Kansas, p. 44; a small measured drawing appears on p. 45)

## B. Historical Events Connected with the Structure:

Erected in 1858, this is the oldest church building (excepting the early Indian missions) in Kansas. The early records of the church were destroyed in Quantrill's raid on August 21, 1863 and it is said that the building was used as a hospital during the crisis. (Wright, Jennie C., Early History of Trinity Episcopal Church, Lawrence, Kansas, 1927, p. 24) Two months after the raid many alterations were made and the building continued to serve as a church until a much larger building was erected on the adjoining lot in 1871. The building was then turned into a parish house and still serves as such.

## C. Likely Sources Not Yet Investigated:

Newspapers such as the Herald of Freedom, a Lawrence, Kansas publication.

Prepared by gC Noffsinger date 7/58

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

## A. General Statement:

## 1. Architectural Character:

Very little remains of the first church but the modified structure of 1863-1865 is an early Kansas example of architecture in the Gothic Revival style.

## 2. Condition of Fabric:

The building is structurally stable and is well maintained.

## B. Technical Description of Exterior:

## 1. Foundations: Native limestone

## 2. Wall construction: Native Limestone

## 3. Porches: None

## 4. Chimneys: One modern brick chimney.

## 5. Openings:

## a. Doorways and doors:

The original doorway is gone. The tower doorway has a simple wood frame and tympanum. The door (said to be original) is made of vertical beaded tongue and groove boards and is backed up with diagonal beaded tongue and groove boards.

## b. Windows and shutters:

The windows are of pegged wooden construction and are of sash type. The frames are wood. Diamond paned leaded glass is used. (Whittemore, Margaret, op. cit., p. 120) No shutters.

## 6. Roof:

## a. Shape, covering:

Gable roof with asphalt shingles. One roof was placed on the chapel between 1900-1910 (The Kansas Churchman, February, 1910, Vol. 36, No. 2, Topeka, Kansas, p. 13)

## b. Cornice, eaves:

A simple molded cornice remains.

## c. Dormers: None

## C. Technical Description of Interiors:

## 1. Floor Plans:

One floor only. Entrance at N.E. Altar and platform at west wall. North side boxed off for a vestry room. (See Part II, D. - Supplemental Material.)

## 2. Stairways: None (perhaps one in tower - not noted)

## 3. Flooring: Said to be original. (Nails and type of wood not noted)

## 4. Wall and ceiling finish: Plastered and painted.

## 5. Doorways and doors: No original interior doors remain.

## 6. Trim: Very simple design in wood.

## 7. Hardware: The hinge arms and door handle of the tower door are wrought-iron and may be original. The hinges themselves are modern.

## 8. Lighting: No original lighting exists.

## 9. Heating: Original was a woodstove. (See Part II, D. - Supplemental Material.)

## D. Supplemental Material:

The following is a description of Mrs. S. A. Riggs quoted from Wright, Jennie C., op. cit., p. 18: 23-LAWR  
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"I wish I could give you a picture of the Church as I saw it in the spring of 1860. The rectangular rough stone building, the windows alone making it different from a barn; we entered at a door at the northeast corner, the Altar a platform slightly raised in the center of the west end upon which was the table and reading desk still used in the Chapel, a railing across the front and on one side. The north side was boxed off for a vestry room, the black walnut boards higher than a man's head with an opening to the Altar platform, another to the body of the Church. At the south side was a melodeon and the choir sat on the front seat, a big stove was at the east end; a wood stove for as yet coal had not been developed."

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PART III. OTHER INFORMATION

## A. Site:

## 1. General setting and orientation:

On a level lot set back from the street about 45 feet.  
The front of the building faces north.

## 2. Enclosures: None

## 3. Outbuildings: None

## 4. Walks: Modern concrete walks lead to the structure.

## 5. Landscaping: Ivy over the walls and a few bushes near the building with a tree on the north side.

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